

From  
Hindu Education Foundation

Attn:  
Thomas Adams, Executive Director,

To  
History–Social Science Subject Matter Committee, Instructional Quality Commission,  
Sacramento, CA

Re: Edits to History Social Science Framework Draft (Second Draft) 2015

Ref: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/cc/cd/documents/att1c6-8hss.doc>

Dear Members,

On behalf of Hindu Education Foundation (HEF), we would like to submit our edits to the draft for the framework for your consideration.

The draft narrative for the framework suggests that it endeavors to "shift from teaching Western Civilization, a narrative that put Western Europe at the center of world events in this period, to teaching world history." We welcome this resolve which is momentous and presents a historical opportunity to correct the imbalance that has existed for many decades.

Unfortunately, we are yet to see this resolve translate into any concrete corrections to the framework, especially in the chapters on Hinduism and ancient India. We still see inaccuracies in the draft narrative such as using the words 'Brahman' and 'Brahmin' interchangeably, which mean two completely different things, confusing the concept of Dharma with the concept of Karma and many others. Also, we see errors of emphasis such as singling out ancient India as patriarchal while not mentioning the same about European civilizations which have been equally or more patriarchal. Some problems also arise out of inaccurate understanding of phenomena in Indian culture that do not have parallels in the Western world and hence are simplistically translated or compared to a known Western phenomena. Furthermore, Hinduism is not portrayed on par with the Abrahamic religions and is presented more from the narrative developed by South Asian studies departments that were set up as part of the 'Area Studies' program during the cold war period to study different regions of strategic interest to the US. This narrative could be more suited for developing an outsider's view of foreign cultures and developing geopolitical strategies, but it does not adhere to the goals of Californian Law and the Standards which aim to enable children to be "aware and accepting of religious diversity." So, with all due respect to

the accomplishments of South Asian scholarship in America, the resolve to shift from a “narrative that put Western Europe at the center of world events” also involves shifting from the ‘Area studies’ narrative to a more holistic and culturally sensitive understanding of non-Western cultures. These cultures also deserve an accurate and dignified portrayal, with emphasis on their accomplishments in art, aesthetics, philosophy and science.

We understand the observation made in the draft narrative that "Decentering Europe is a complicated process, because themes, periods, narratives, and terminology of historical study were originally built around Europe." But we believe that it is more urgent than ever, especially considering that this imbalance is manifesting itself as negative stereotypes and bullying against Hindu children who face them on a constant basis, as many children themselves have reported to the Instructional Quality Commission in the earlier hearings.

We humbly urge you to consider these edits in the revised draft of the framework and help provide Hindu children the dignity that they have been denied for far too long.

Regards  
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## Grade Six – World History and Geography: Ancient Civilizations

### Edit 1

Line 176 and 177

**Current:** (notably Mesopotamia, Syria, Anatolia, and Persia), the Nile Valley of Africa, northern India, China, and the lands around the Aegean Sea. By about 2000

**Suggested:** (notably Mesopotamia, Syria, Anatolia, and Persia), the Nile Valley of Africa, ~~northern~~ India, China, and the lands around the Aegean Sea. By about 2000

**Justification:** Mention of India needs to be on similar lines as other nations and geographies described.

### Edit 2

Line 185 to 194

**Current:** Powerful people (warlords) took control of the tribes in larger areas and eventually the strongest warlords formed states or city-states with governments headed by kings or, very occasionally, queens, often claiming authority from gods and passing on power to their own descendants. Supported by political elites (nobles, officials, warriors) and priests, these monarchs imposed taxes on ordinary city dwellers and rural people to pay for bureaucracies, armies, irrigation works, and monumental architecture. Writing systems were first invented to serve governments, religions, and merchants, and later became means of transmitting religious, scientific, and literary ideas.

**Suggested:** ***In some places*** powerful people (warlords) took control of the tribes in larger areas and eventually the strongest warlords formed states or city-states with governments headed by kings or, very occasionally, queens, often claiming authority from gods and passing on power to their own descendants. Supported by political elites (nobles, officials, warriors) and priests, these monarchs imposed taxes on ordinary city dwellers and rural people to pay for bureaucracies, armies, irrigation works, and monumental architecture. ***But there are exceptions as well, such as the Indus-Saravswati civilization in India. As archeologists point out, the city-states had no centralized control and the rulers seem to have had a lot less power. It is believed that they were managed by a community based distributed system of power.*** Writing systems were first invented to serve governments, religions, and merchants, and later became means of transmitting religious, scientific, and literary ideas.

**Justification:** This section privileges the eurocentric narrative that all civilizations were backward till the onset of Western modernism. While this may be true in many instances, this simplistic generalization takes away the fact that there were many ancient civilizations that do not conform to this narrative. The most important one being the Indus Saraswati civilization. Since it was one of the biggest civilization of that time, this exception should be mentioned. For detailed information see Danino 2010[1].

John Marshall, one of the original excavators of earliest sites of this civilization noted "There is nothing that we know of in prehistoric Egypt or Mesopotamia or anywhere else in western Asia to compare with the well-built baths and commodious houses of the citizens of Mohenjodaro. In those countries, much money and thought were lavished on the building of magnificent temples for the Gods and on the places and tombs of kings, but the rest of the people seemingly had to content themselves with insignificant dwellings of mud. In the Indus Valley, the picture is reversed and the finest structures are those directed for the convenience of the citizens." [2] .

J.M. Kenoyer, scholar of ancient India and an archeologist who worked excavating these sites, notes that trade and religion rather than military might were real instruments of authority; indeed, no piece of Harappan art glorifies rulers, conquest or warfare[1][3]

Archeologist Rita Wright, emphasizes 'a growing awareness that [the Harappan civilization] does not fit into the social, political and economic categories developed for the study of other states', such as Mesopotamia or Egypt, which had centralized administrative structures. 'Among the Harappans on the other hand, a pattern of decentralization appears to have persisted'. In the formative era, Wright also notes "an absence of factionalism" and "a unified material culture", which, to her, point to 'production and distribution systems based upon kinship or community-related organizations'.[1][4]

Danino notes "this civilization thus displays an individuality of its own based on its decentralization and community based distribution of power- two traits that any rural Indian of today will instantly relate to." [1].

### **Edit 3**

Line 193 and 194

**Current:** religious, scientific, and literary ideas. Some of the religions of this era, such as early Hinduism and Judaism, set the stage for later world belief systems.

**Suggested:** religious, scientific, and literary ideas. Some of the religions of this era, such as ~~early~~ Hinduism and Judaism, set the stage for later world belief systems.

**Justification:** All religions evolve over a period of time. There is no particular period

which can be demarcated as early Hinduism. Also the mention needs to be consistent with other religions mentioned in this context.

#### **Edit 4**

Line 786 and 787

**Current:** plain (Ganges River). The Indus River and its tributaries, along with Saraswati (or

**Suggested:** The Indus River *and Saraswati rivers* along with *their* tributaries

**Justification:** Saraswati was a river system with tributaries Drishadvati, Satudri (Sutlej), Chandrabhaga (Chenab), Vipasa (Beas) and the Iravati (Ravi)[1]

#### **Edit 5**

Line 804 and 805

**Current:** such as a male figure that resembles the Hindu God Shiva in meditating posture.

**Suggested:** such as a male figure that resembles the Hindu God Shiva in a meditating posture, clay figurines with the 'Namaste' gesture and dolls with vermillion on forehead as many Hindu men and women wear even today[5].

**Justification:** It is important for children to understand this continuity with current day customs of many Hindu American kids so that, these customs are understood, and accepted and not stereotyped.

The pictures of the excavated artifacts mentioned can be found in [5]. Here are a few online links

Pasupati seal (Hindu God Shiva)

<http://www.nationalmuseumindia.gov.in/prodCollections.asp?pid=42&id=1&lk=dp1>

Figurine in Namaste pose

<http://www.nationalmuseumindia.gov.in/prodCollections.asp?pid=36&id=1&lk=dp1>

#### **Edit 6**

Line 812

**Current:** a complex oral tradition. In that period, people speaking Indic languages, which

**Suggestion:** a complex oral tradition. These texts were composed by many generations of sages called Rishis (male) and Rishikas[6] (female) who came from diverse communities and social backgrounds and have been highly revered in Hindu tradition. The Vedas consists of thousands of hymns and were composed in a time span of several millennia.

**Justification:** The section talks about the Vedic period but no proper context is provided as to what these Vedas are, who their composers were, etc. The suggested edit will provide the context for the section.

The Rig Veda records the names of 27 Rishikas, female sages and the hymns they composed[6]. This fact is important as no other major religion has women authors to their sacred texts and even modern creations such as Constitutions of many countries were solely written by men.

The most important Rishis such as Valmiki, Vyasa, Jabali, Vishwamitra, Lopamudra, Aushija, Gritasamada etc. came from diverse social backgrounds. The origins of most Rishis is not known but wherever known they have not been necessarily Brahmins by birth.

## **Edit 7**

Line 812 to 821

**Current:** In that period, people speaking Indic languages, which are part of the larger Indo-European family of languages, entered South Asia, probably by way of Iran. Gradually, Indic languages, including Sanskrit, spread across northern India. They included the ancestors of such modern languages as Hindi, Urdu, and Bengali. The early Indic speakers were most likely animal herders. They may have arrived in India in scattered bands, later intermarrying with populations perhaps ancestral to those who speak Dravidian languages, such as Tamil and Telugu in southern India and Sri Lanka today. In the same era, nomads who spoke Indo-Iranian languages moved into Persia. Indic, Iranian, and most European languages are related.

**Suggested:** Since these texts are in Sanskrit, an ancient language which has similarities with the Indo-European family of languages, some scholars posited that Sanskrit speaking people might have come from outside of India possibly by way of Iran. But other scholars disagree and suggest that they were natives of India. This is a complex question the answer to which is still being searched through the findings of archeology and linguistics.

**Justification:** This is a highly contested theory but is being presented as an established fact. It is necessary to reword it so as to bring in the multiple narratives that exist, and also not to base too many theories on top of this theory itself. In the wording it is important not to emphasize one position over the other. We have suggested a very simple alternative that should be satisfactory for from all

viewpoints.

Here is a gist of the theory: Many (but not all) linguists posit the migration theory to explain how Sanskrit belonging to Indo-European family of languages is found in India. 'The Indo-Aryan Controversy: Evidence and Inference in Indian History'[8] edited by Edwin Bryant lists the various arguments by different authors supporting and opposing the migration theory based on Linguists. While that is the case in Linguistics, most archeologists favor the position that there exists no credible archeological evidence to support such a large scale migration.

J M Kenoyer notes "there is no archaeological or biological evidence for invasions or mass migrations into the Indus Valley between the end of the Harappan phase, about 1900 B.C. and the beginning of the Early Historic Period around 600 B.C. [9] See also B B Lal[10], S.P Gupta[11], S R.Rao[12] among most archeologists who have questioned Aryan Invasion / Migration theory on lack of credible archeological evidence. Recent entrant to this field has been the field of genetics which too has thrown up no conclusive evidence in terms of distinct genetic markers that would be visible in any large scale migrations.[13][14][15][16]

While this continues to be debated in the scholarly realm it is fair that students know that this is a complex question that continues to be researched by scholars.

### **Edit 8**

Line 823 to 825

**Current:** In this era, Vedic culture (or Brahmanism in the existing standards) emerged as a belief system that combined the beliefs of Indic speakers with those of older populations.

**Suggested:** (We suggest an alternative to this line in our suggested edit at line number 833. We would like this to be moved down after the concepts of Brahman is understood so that it provides context)

**Justification:** There seems to be confusion in the current draft on the words 'Brahman' which means 'all pervading reality' or 'divine principle of being' and 'Brahmin' (spelt as brAhmin or brAhmaN) which is a varna or a community. This section should talk in essence about the philosophy of 'Brahman' and its manifestation as a thought and culture which is essentially the Vedic culture and not about the 'Brahmin' community. Since the words sound similar there seems to have been some confusion. To avoid this confusion, using only the word 'Vedic culture' is suggested.

The erroneous usage of the two words 'Brahmanism' and 'Brahminism'

interchangeably should be avoided also as it undermines the contribution of different non-Brahmin communities to the Vedic culture and thereby to Hinduism. Elements of Vedic culture have come from contributions from diverse communities over a span of thousands of years. Also Vedic culture is not a belief system so need to change the sentence to reflect correct understanding of the concepts.

The other problem with this sentence is also that it privileges the Aryan Invasion /Migration theory considering it as an established fact whereas it still a highly contested one. This sentence has to be agnostic to theories on origin of Sanskrit speaking people as it is still an open question in history.

### **Edit 9**

Line 827 to 829

**Current:** Brahmins, that is, priestly families, assumed authority over complex devotional rituals, but many important sages, such as Valmiki and Vyasa, were not brahmins.

**Suggested:** Request deletion of these lines.

**Justification:** This section should talk about the concept of 'Brahman' or Vedic culture and not about the 'Brahmin' "caste". The authors of the Vedas and Upanishads who propounded the concept of 'Brahman' are not referred to as Brahmins but as 'Rishis' in all texts including the Vedas themselves. So to talk about Brahmins in this section is not correct. Rishis as explained earlier came from diverse social backgrounds.

Secondly, the authority over many rituals remained distributed among different communities. Several other communities are known to perform rituals and priestly functions. There is no evidence that Brahmins assumed monopoly over the devotional rituals. For example Nishads, the boatmen have authority over the prestigious Ganga pujaiya for newlywed couples. For some of the numerous other examples, please refer to [17] which has information on a number of non-Brahmin communities that performed priestly functions and temple rituals like Vairavis from Melakkaran community who officiate rituals at Nattukottai Chetti community temple, Chemmis or Shemmis were temple priests that were appointed by Chieftains of Paniyans etc. Distribution of responsibility of performing complex rituals amongst diverse communities has been a continuing tradition in India.

Thirdly Valmiki and Vyasa are not exceptions but have been central to Hinduism having composed the most important epics Ramayana and Mahabharata. Vyasa is also known as the original Guru in Hindu tradition for having collected, compiled and catalogued the Vedas. There are many other names of Rishis (and Rishikas) that have been mentioned earlier like Lopamudra, Gritasamada, Vishwamitra, Aushija etc who were not born to Brahmin parents. But while deleting the second line, the essence of this fact has to be captured and we suggest it be captured in the



wordings in our edit for line number 812 above.

#### **Edit 10**

Line 829 and 830

**Current:** The brahmin class expounded the idea of the oneness of all living things and of Brahman as the divine principle of being.

**Suggested:** The ~~brahmin class~~ Rishis, or sages expounded the idea of the oneness of all living things and of Brahman as the divine principle of being.

**Justification:** The worldview of 'Brahman' emerged out of the Vedas, whose composers are known as Rishis (sages) and not Brahmins (the priestly varṇa). Please see our edit for line 812 above. It looks like again there is some confusion between the words 'Brahman' the concept and 'Brahmin' the varna. They are two different things. We have explained the difference between the two in our comments above.

#### **Edit 11**

Line 830 to 833

**Current:** The Hindu tradition is thus monistic, the idea of reality being a unitary whole. Brahman may be manifested in many ways, including incarnation in the form of deities, including Vishnu, preserver of the world, and Shiva, creator and destroyer of the world.

**Suggested:** The Hindu tradition is thus monistic (the idea of reality being a unitary whole) **and pantheistic (the idea that there is divinity within all beings and things)**. Brahman may be manifested in many ways, including ~~incarnation~~ in the form of deities, including ***Brahma, the creator***, Vishnu, ***the*** preserver ~~of the world~~ and Shiva, the creator and destroyer ***the dissolver, representing the principle of continuous creation, maintenance and dissolution of the Universe. Brahman may also manifest as different goddesses such as Durga, Lakshmi and Saraswati and also as elements of nature such as trees, plants, animals, rivers and mountains.***

**Suggested alternative for lines 823 to 825 to be inserted here:** The Vedic worldview, being monistic and pantheistic, allowed the blending of deities, rituals, customs, and beliefs of different communities that dotted the landscape of India, well beyond the confines of the river banks where most of the Vedic hymns were composed. This meshing together of different traditions, beliefs and schools of thought led to the emergence of Vedic culture.

**Justification:** Hindu tradition is not just monistic but also pantheistic which needs to be mentioned. 'Monistic' does not fully capture the idea of 'Brahman'. There also seems to be confusion between the words 'Brahman' which means 'all pervading reality' or 'divine principle of being' and deity named 'Brahma' who is the creator in Hindu mythology. Brahman manifests as Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva representing the principle of continuous creation, maintenance and dissolution. Please change the word 'destroyer' to 'dissolver', as 'destroyer' could be stereotyped as evil. It is also important to mention that other deities and natural elements too are seen as forms of Brahman.

It is also important to explain the organic evolution of Vedic culture hence the suggested alternative to lines 823 to 825.

### **Edit 12**

Line 838 to 849

**Current:** Performance of duties and ceremonies became one dimension of the supreme quest to achieve oneness with divine reality. That fulfillment, however, demands obedience to the moral law of the universe, called dharma, which also refers to performance of social duties. Success or failure at existing in harmony with dharma determines how many times an individual might be subject to reincarnation, or repeated death and rebirth at either lower or higher positions of moral and ritual purity. Progress toward spiritual realization is governed by karma, the principle that right deeds done in one lifetime condition an individual's place in the next one.

### **Suggested:**

The objectives of human life were broadly categorized into Dharma (fulfilling responsibility towards other beings in harmony with the natural law of the universe), kāma (fulfilling desires), artha (achieving material prosperity) and mokṣa (attaining spiritual liberation). As one goes through the cycle of reincarnation, various actions the individual performs were said to be subject to the principle of 'karma', which suggested that the fruits of good or bad deeds done in one lifetime would affect one's well-being in this life as well as the next. A person wishing to step out of the cycle of reincarnation would pursue mokṣa (spiritual liberation) by various means such as yoga. The Upanishads and Bhagavad Gita propounded the concept of yoga by which one could progress spiritually and achieve oneness with the divine reality. Yoga expounded different paths to achieve this including the path of selfless action (Karma), the path of Knowledge (Jnana), path of devotion (Bhakti) and path of meditation (Raja).

**Justification:** This paragraph on the teachings of Hinduism has several problems on counts of accuracy and emphasis. A lot of teachings seem to be jumbled up and terms and concepts used interchangeably.

1) For example the first line selectively talks of “Performance of duties and ceremonies” as “one dimension of the supreme quest to achieve oneness with divine reality.” The other dimensions are not mentioned. For holistic representation, it is important to mention all the four pathways of Yoga as explained in the Upanishads, the Bhagavad Gita. These are the path of knowledge (Jnana Yoga), path of devotion (Bhakti Yoga), path of selfless action (Karma Yoga) and path of meditation (Raja Yoga). It would be wrong to cull some pieces from them and present them in isolation.

2) ‘obedience’ is a wrong word, as unlike the Abrahamic religions, Dharma has no strict rules or commandments.

3) Spiritual progress is not just by Karma but through the four paths of Yoga.

4) Moksha (liberation from birth) is through spiritual realization.

5) The four purusharthas or the goals of a human life are Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha which are completely missed. Hindu savants of all times recognized the kAma and Artha to be natural and essential features of the human condition, which should be cultivated with finesse and care. This is why they composed several texts related to these objectives such as the kAmasUtra and arthashastra. Also, the Hindu worldview does not admit a separation of secular from the spiritual. The pursuit of Kama and Artha are as essential to Hindu practice as that of Dharma and Moksha.

This section has to be uncluttered. We suggest a very simple alternative which sums up the concepts. The similar sections for other religions are very well written but teachings of Hinduism are inaccurately represented or are obscured in difficult wordings.

### **Edit 13**

Line 846 and 847

**Current:** Many of the central practices of Hinduism today, including home and temple worship, yoga and meditation, rites of passage (samskaras)

**Suggestion:** Many of the central practices of Hinduism today, including **Ahimsa (non harming)**, home and temple worship, yoga and meditation, rites of passage (samskaras), **spiritual art (music, dance, sculpture) and Ayurveda (the practice of good health)**.

Justification: Include Ahimsa, as it developed over the Vedic period with the first mention in the Vedas and further development in Upanishads. It is one of the ten tenets of Yoga mentioned as part of Yama-Niyama in Patanjali’s Yoga Sutra. It has been central to Hinduism[21][22].

Also add Ayurveda which developed over this period of time and ritual music and dance which later developed into Indian classical music. Bharata's nAtyashAstra which is a seminal text on Hindu art is described as the fifth Veda.

#### **Edit 14**

Line 858

**Current:** to a particular varna by his professional excellence and his good conduct, not by

**Suggestion:** to a particular varna by his professional excellence and his good conduct, not by

**Justification:** It is erroneous to say that the varna was decided by "good conduct". "Good conduct" was a requirement for all varnas in their respective duties. A 'vaishya' (businessman), for example, would not move to any other varna like say being a kshatriya (warrior) based on being ethical in the business.. 'Good conduct' would only help that person to become a better 'vaishya' (businessman) not a warrior. Mobility was on count of various other reasons such as one's aptitude.

#### **Edit 15**

Line 872 to 877

**Current:** Caste, however, is a term that social scientists use to describe any particularly unbending social structure, for example, slave-holding society in the American south before the Civil War, which can make the "caste" label offensive. Today many Hindus, in India and in the United States, do not identify themselves as belonging to a caste. Teachers should make clear to students that this was a social and cultural structure rather than a religious belief.

**Suggestion:** Caste, however, is a term that social scientists use to describe any particularly unbending social structure, for example, slave-holding society in the American south before the Civil War, which can make the "caste" label offensive. Today many Hindus, in India and in the United States, do not identify themselves as belonging to a caste. Teachers should make clear to students that this was a social and cultural structure rather than a religious belief.

**Justification:** Request deletion of the first part that makes references to slave-holding society. Since this is a complex issue and it has been evident that teachers find it hard to understand and present it, any references that can lead to inaccurate understanding and stereotyping of Hindu children should be completely avoided in keeping with Standards for Evaluating Instructional Materials for Social Content.

**Edit 16**

Line 877 to 883

**Current:** As in Mesopotamia and Egypt, priests, rulers, and other elites used religion to justify the social hierarchy. The teacher has students draw a social hierarchy pyramid of the varnas and compare that pyramid with the Mesopotamian social hierarchy pyramid they made earlier. In both cases, rulers, political elites (warriors and officials) and priests were on the top of the social hierarchy. This was a common pattern of premodern societies.

**Suggested:** Request the deletion of this paragraph.

**Justification:** Such activities based on simplistic understanding and comparison has potential to make students vulnerable to religious bias which is against the Standards for Evaluating Instructional Materials for Social Content, Education Code Sections 51501, 60044(a) and (b) which state their purpose to “enable all students to become aware and accepting of religious diversity while being allowed to remain secure in any religious beliefs they may already have.” Many children have expressed this to committee as well. Request you to completely remove this activity and not introduce similar activities.

**Edit 17**

Line 883 and 884

**Current:** premodern societies. Although ancient India was a patriarchy, women had a right

**Suggested:** premodern societies. ~~Although ancient India was a patriarchy,~~ In ancient India women had a right

**Justification:** Almost all societies, ancient and modern have been by and large patriarchal except for very few and small exceptions. But in the current framework, only Hinduism and ancient India is being singled out and characterized as patriarchal while the same characterization for European civilizations is not done. Hinduism is the only religion that has women as authors of the earliest known sacred texts that are central to their religion; whereas this is unheard of in any other ancient society. Please also consider this against the fact that most modern nations have had no founding authors to their Constitution.

**Edit 18**

Line 884

**Current:** to their personal wealth, especially jewelry, gold, and silver, but fewer property

**Suggested:** to their personal wealth, especially jewelry, gold, and silver, but fewer property

**Justification:** Fewer property rights for women is true for most cultures, and true for even modern nations till very recently, so to single out ancient India and Hinduism to make this point is wrong and violates the standards on adverse reflection. In fact, many communities in India like the famous Marumakkathayam in the Southern Indian state of Kerala had matrilineal inheritance.

#### **Edit 19**

After line 885

**Suggested addition:** Many women were composers of the sacred texts, the Vedas, from the earliest times. These sages are probably the world's earliest known female poets. Many women also participated in scholarly public debates and were considered to be authorities on spiritual matters.

**Justification:** The Rig Veda itself records the names of 27 female sages and the hymns they composed[18] . We know of no other female poets who were as old as the Rishikas of the Rig Veda, hence it is essential to mention this from a point of view of covering the contributions of women as per the standards. Standards for Evaluating Instructional Materials for Social Content, Education Code Sections 51501, 60040(a), and 60044(a) state that "Whenever instructional material presents developments in history or current events or achievements in art, science, or any other field, the contributions of women and men should be represented in approximately equal numbers."

We know of no women poets as old as the Rig Vedic composers hence this fact needs to be mentioned.

Gargi is an example of women who were considered authority in spiritual matters. Gargi was given the title Brahnavadini (which means the expounder of the ultimate truth) and represented all the learned sages in debating the famous Sage Yagnavalakya. Their dialogue is a famous treatise in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad. For a brief introduction of Gargi Vachaknavi the Wikipedia article also could be referred to ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gargi\\_Vachaknavi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gargi_Vachaknavi)). Women being debaters and authorities on spiritual matters is unique to Hinduism. We do not have any such examples in other major religions. And hence this has to be mentioned.

#### **Edit 20**

Line 892

**Current:** always make the correct moral decisions in this epic work. The teacher might

**Suggested:** ~~always make the correct moral decisions~~ ***always strive to make the right moral choices even when confronted with difficult situations***, in this epic work. The teacher might

**Justification:** For Hindus, mythology is reflective and not prescriptive. One learns from the moral dilemma as also the right choices and the mistakes that the characters in the epic make. See Pattanaik 2006 and Pattanaik 2013 [19] [20].

#### **Edit 21**

After Line 907

**Suggested addition:** The Jain understanding of non harming is expansive, extending to one's thoughts, speech and actions, avoiding harm through these modes toward any living being.

**Justification:** Request adding a line on Jainism that reflects its teachings. We think Jainism is under-represented in the section.

#### **Edit 22**

Line 909

**Current:** It has continued to play a role in modern India, notably in Mohandas Gandhi's

**Suggested:** The key ideas of Indian civilization such as Dharma, Yoga and Ahimsa as propounded by Hinduism, Jainism and Buddhism have continued to influence and shape the Indian society, notably in influencing leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, in inspiring the struggle for Independence against the Colonial rule and in the formation of the Republic of India.

**Justification:** Mahatma Gandhi was inspired by the idea of Ahimsa from his readings of the Bhagavad Gita as he himself has noted in his writings. He has extensively written about the influences in his writings.

In 'Gita, My Mother', Gandhi writes "After 40 years of unremitting endeavor fully to enforce the teaching of the Gita in my own life, I have in all humility felt that perfect renunciation is impossible without perfect observance of satya and ahimsa in every shape and form." [21] Mahatma Gandhi relied on the teachings of Bhagavad Gita especially its ideas of 'Aparigraha' and 'Sambhava' to understand the concept of Ahimsa and also in nurturing the concept of 'satyagraha' which was the application of Ahimsa (non-harming) to the political and social spheres, especially in the political resistance against the Colonial rulers. Bhagavad Gita had a deep influence on him.

He wrote in his autobiography "I started reading Swami Vivekananda's Rajayoga with some of these friends, and M. N. Dvivedi's Rajayoga with others. I had to read Patanjali's Yoga Sutras with one friend, and the Bhagavad Gita with quite a number. We formed a sort of Seekers' Club where we had regular readings. I already had faith in the Gita, which had a fascination for me. Now I realized the necessity of diving deeper into it. I had one or two translations, by means of which I tried to understand the original Samskrit." "What effect this reading of the Gita had on my friends only they can say, but to me the Gita became an infallible guide of conduct. It became my dictionary of daily reference. Just as I turned to the English dictionary for the meanings of English words that I did not understand, I turned to this dictionary of conduct for a ready solution of all my troubles and trials. Words like aparigraha (non-possession) and samabhava (equability) gripped me. How to cultivate and preserve that equability was the question. How was one to treat alike insulting, insolent, and corrupt officials, co-workers of yesterday raising meaningless opposition, and men who had always been good to one?"[22]

### **Edit 23**

Line 911

**Current:** In the late fourth century BCE Chandragupta Maurya unified most of India

**Suggested:** In the late fourth century BCE Chandragupta Maurya unified most of India through conquests and diplomacy and established the Maurya Empire. The Artha Shastra, a treatise which covers topics from statecraft to economics to ethics, is ascribed to Maurya's royal advisor, Chanakya, and still referred to today as a basis for Indian political thought.

**Justification:** The Artha Shastra[23] is one of the most important texts of ancient Indians that is used to date to understand and shape Indian political thought. Learning about the Artha Shastra will plant a seed for a point of comparison to other political theories, such as Adam Smith's The Invisible Hand or Karl Marx's the Communist Manifesto.

### **Edit 24**

Line 919

**Current:** change of heart, converted to Buddhism, and devoted the rest of his rule to

**Suggested:** change of heart, ~~converted to~~ embraced Buddhism, and devoted the rest of his rule to

**Justification:** 'Conversion' is not the right word. It is an Abrahamic concept. Indian



religions did not have the concept of religious conversion.

## Grade Seven – World History and Geography: Medieval and Early Modern Times

### Edit 1

Line 685

**Current:** ten numerical system and the concept of zero. Travel and internal colonization by

**Suggested:** ten numerical system and the concept of zero. Travel ~~and internal colonization~~ ***internal migrations*** by

**Justification:** Colonization is not the right word as there was no colonization as it is understood today. There were different rulers who ruled at different points on different regions but the culture was not forcefully imposed.

### Edit 2

Line 686

**Current:** settlers from northern into southern India helped produce a common Indic culture

**Suggested:** settlers from northern into southern India helped ~~produce~~ ***develop*** a common Indic culture

**Justification:** 'produce' is not the right word, change it to 'develop'

### Edit 3

Line 689

**Current:** temples and schools spread. Sanskrit became the principal literary language throughout India. Enduring contributions of ancient Indian civilization to other

**Suggested:** temples and schools spread. Sanskrit became the principal literary language throughout India ***with landmark works being produced by writers such as the Hindu poet Kalidasa and the Buddhist monk Vasubandhu.***

**Justification:** Add the names of two very famous Hindu and Buddhist poets of the time.

### Edit 4

Line 690

**Current:** areas of Afroeurasia include the cotton textile industry, the technology of

**Suggested:** areas of Afroeurasia include mathematics, the cotton textile industry, the technology of

**Justification:** Mathematics was one of the foremost of contributions of Indian civilization to Afroeurasia and hence should be mentioned first.

**Edit 5**

Line 694

**Current:** achievements in science, math, art, architecture, and Sanskrit literature. After the

**Suggested:** achievements in science, math, art (including Music and Dance), architecture, and Sanskrit literature. After the

**Justification:** Add and emphasize music and dance.

**Edit 6**

Line 709

**Current:** and Ramananda. Even though India was not unified into one state, nor did its

**Suggested:** Ravidas, Alvars, and Ramananda. Even though India was not unified into one state, nor did its

**Justification:** Add Ravidas and Alvars along with Mira bai and others to show the geographical and social diversity in Bhakti movement.

**Edit 7**

Line 722

**Current:** modern rulers displayed their power through temples and that the architectural

**Suggested:** modern rulers displayed their ~~power~~ cultural sophistication, generosity and military accomplishments through temples and inscriptions therein and that the architectural

**Justification:** Not all pre-modern rulers built temples to display their power. Also, Cholas especially were known to have built temples of different sects and communities and not just their own.

**Edit 8**

Line 1544 to 1545

**Current:** was founded by Guru Nanak, a social reformer who challenged the authority of the Brahmins and the Hindu caste order. Students learn about the Sikh

## Scripture

**Suggested:** was founded by Guru Nanak, a social reformer who challenged the authority of the Brahmins and the Hindu caste order who propounded the message of equality, fraternal love and virtue. Students learn about the Sikh Scripture

**Justification:** This adversely reflects on Hinduism and is in violation with the Standards. It be replaced with positive contributions of Sikhism without adversely reflecting on Hinduism.

### Edit 9

Line 1553 to 1554

**Current:** people of different religions were often peaceful, some Mughul rulers, who were Muslims, persecuted Sikhs. Other Mughal rulers, most notably Akbar,

**Suggested:** people of different religions were often peaceful, Mughul rulers, who were Muslims, persecuted **Hindus**, Sikhs, **Jains and Buddhists**. Few exceptions, most notably Akbar,

**Justification:** Most Mughul rulers persecuted Hindus, Sikhs, Jains and Buddhists. The most notable exception was Akbar.

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